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ABSTRACT

A study examined the influence of preschool reading readiness skills instruction on first graders' reading achievement. The subjects were 52 first grade students who had attended preschool, and their parents. The parents received questionnaires containing 40 reading readiness questions and the children took the California Achievement Test (CAT) in April of their kindergarten year. Results indicated that children who attended preschool and whose parents spent time providing reading readiness skills had only slightly higher CAT scores than did children without such experience, although children with readiness skills did have marginally higher achievement scores. (Sixteen references, the parent questionnaire, and two tables of data are attached.) (RS)

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# Should Preschoolers Be Taught Reading Readiness Skills?

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by

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Abstract

To determine if reading readiness skills had an impact on first grader's achievement, parent questionnaires and the California Achievement Test scores were examined. Questionnaires were distributed to parents to determine if reading readiness skills at home improved CAT scores of first graders. Comparisons of the questionnaires and CAT scores indicated that children who had preschool and whose parents spent time providing reading readiness skills had only slightly high CAT scores than did children without such experience. The study sugguests that there is no significant difference between children who have had reading readiness experience and those who have not, although children with readiness skills did have marginally higher achievement scores.

Reading Readiness is a concept that teachers and parents can provide for preschool children. Many children are coming to school in the 1980's emotionally and intellectually unprepared to learn. (Freeman and Wasserman, p.115). Parents need to learn how to teach their young children prereading skills. Preschool teachers also need to aid in the education of young minds in order to teach them the skills they will need to achieve in elementary school and beyond. There are successful programs, (Tyron Project in Pennsylvania; Spewock, p.648 '88) and activities, (Goetz, p. '83 and Grinnella, p.4 '84) to aid parents and preschool teachers in the reading readiness process. The knowledge and use of these programs and activities can be important in teaching children readiness skills before they enter elementary school.

If a person were to look-up the meaning of reading readiness in a reading manual around the time 1920 he might find this definition: ".. and idea of a critical mental or physical age at which children had the cognitive and motivational skills necessary to learn to read." (Just and Carpenter p. 343 '87). This theory was based on several studies but two that are of importance. Examining the two prominent theories today, reading specialists cannot conclusively say that mental age alone dictates reading readiness. Based on her extensive research Dolores Durkin states: "... it makes no sense whatsoever to think about readiness for reading as being defined by some specified chronological or mental age." (Durkin p. 71, '70).

The first of the two studies Just and Carpenter examined was called "Satisfactory Process", which was an experiment that had

children try and learn to read thirty-seven sight words and also complete a thirteen step reading program all in four months time. (Just and Carpenter p. 353, '87). The study tried to prove that children below the age of 6.5 could not preform the reading tasks well; thus were not ready for formal reading instruction. The problem with the experiment and the theory was the exclusion of information of which the children below the age of 6.5 did answer correctly.

The second study had children match what the instructor said to one of four target words on paper using phonics. The study found that children below the age of seven could not preform all the tasks. Researchers used the study to conclude that the mental age of reading was seven years. The problem with this experiment was that the researchers only tried to find out if the children could preform the tasks. They did not try to find out if the children could learn the tasks.

Just and Carpenter suggest a modern definition for reading readiness which encompasses intellect, motivational factors, and also takes into account reading programs: "Reading readiness is best conceptualized as a process of specific cognitive and motivational skills that are related to the cognitive requirements of a particular reading program." (Just and Carpenter, p.354 '87).

Reading readiness is a process of early reading that may begin with reading to an infant or young preschooler. There are some researchers who believe that prereading begins even earlier and would have the mother read to her fetus during her pregancy. For years there have been researchers who believe in different theories and

different starting points to reading readiness and eventually formal reading but none hold more truth then the simiple idea that each child learns at a different rate and not all children can learn from one instructional method. A.I. Gates agrees: "The optimum time of beginning reading is not entirely dependent upon the nature of the child himself, but it is in a large measure determined by the nature of the reading program." (Durkin, p.69 '70). Dolores Durkin, using Gates's statement elaborates on it: "...concept of readiness denotes a relationship - in this case, a relationship between the abilities and understandings of a child and the type and quality of reading instruction that will be offered." (Durkin, p.69 '70).

Reading readiness is a way of preparing a child for formal reading instruction. An introduction to prereading skills could be: providing reading materials in the classroom and in the home for the child to look through and become familiar with them, encourage reading in a supportive way, and when possible providing a role model for the child to emulate. It is only when a child is exposed to books that he becomes aware of them. If a child, when he or she is a preschooler, is given an opportunity to learn some reading readiness skills he or she may preform acedemically better than those who did not.

Hypothesis

Preschool children who are given the opportunity to learn reading readiness skills do not educationally perform any better than those preschool children who have not had such instruction. It is

hypothesized, therefore, that preschoolers who are given a head start in education, especially in reading, will not achieve significantly better when they enter first grade when compared to preschoolers who did not have such experience.

## Definitions

For purposes of this study, the following definitions were deemed important.

reading readiness:

1. "Reading readiness is best conceptualized as a process of specific cognitive and motivational skills that are related to the cognitive requirements of a particular reading program." (Carpenter and Just, p. 354 '87)
2. "... mastery of a set of intellectual and motivational skills that children should have when they begin to read." (Carpenter and Just, p. 353 '87)

preschooler:

A child, usually two and a half to five years old. A child who is not yet in kindergarten.

preschool:

A child care system which helps preschoolers prepare for formal elementary schooling and socialization.

## Procedures

Lincoln Elementary School in Elizabeth, New Jersey was choosen

for this reading readiness research. It had a population of first graders who have had and who have not had preschool or reading readiness instruction.

The superintendent from the Elizabeth school system was telephoned and his secretary responded. She requested copies of the Master's Thesis Proposal and the parent questionnaire for the superintendent to review. Copies of the requested information was hand delivered by the researcher to the superintendent's office.

Once the superintendent agreed to the research and allowed it to be preformed in his school system the principal from Lincoln Elememtary was contacted. The principal requested written permission to have the research preformed in his school and copies of the Master's Thesis Proposal and parent questionnaire. The letter was never obtained but the superintendent's secretary did call the principal to give varification that research could be done in his school and that the superintendent did give such authority. The telephone call by the superintendent's secretary was suitable to the principal and the reseach was allowed.

CAT scores of first graders, taken in the April of their kindergarten school year, was collected and recorded on a chart. First grade teachers, who agreed to assist the reseacher, were given parent questionnaires and a cover letter explaining to the parents what was requested and if they would comply to answer the questions as honestly as possible. The first grade teachers sent the questionnaires home with their students and requested they return them as soon as possible. Another chart was needed to collect the data from the questionnaires.

Subjects

1. First graders' achievement scores; Those who did not have reading readiness exposure and those who did.
2. School officials of Elizabeth.
3. First graders from Lincoln Elementary in Elizabeth New Jersey.
4. The children whose parents complete the questionnaire will be choosen for this study.
5. Fifty-two students will be choosen for this study.

Methods

The parent questionnaires which contained forty reading readiness questions, were given to each of the first grade teachers to be sent home with their students to be filled out by the parents. From the ninety questionnaires sent home with the students, fifty-two were returned to the teachers and given to the researcher. The fifty-two students whose parents completed the questionnaire were then picked to be in the study.

April California Achievement Test, (CAT) scores were gathered from the first grader's kindergarten folders because the first graders weren't tested in September and wouldn't be tested again until April of 1989 which would be too late for this study. The average of the Vocabulary and Comprehension scores were evaluated.

Four charts were created to collect the data from the questionnaires and the CAT scores. The four charts were divided

between students who had preschool experience and those students who did not have preschool experience. Two charts were created for the CAT scores and two charts were created for the questionnaires.

The average of the Comprehension and Vocabulary scores were totaled and the means, standard deviations, and ts were found.

Point scale values were assigned to questions on the questionnaire. The questions were to be answered "yes" or "no" by the parents in the appropriate selections of: "always", "seldom", or "never". "Always" received a point value of two, "Seldom" received a point value of one, "never" received a point value of zero.

## Results

Four tables were constructed based on information collected and recorded on charts using California Achievement Test, (CAT) scores and parent questionnaires.

Table one shows that 60% of the first graders in Lincoln

Table I

Comparison of students with and without preschool experience

| Preschool Experience | No Preschool Experience |
|---|---|
| 31 Students<br>60% | 21 Students<br>40% |

school in Elizabeth have had preschool experience. This information suggests that more than half of the students in first grade received preschooling and that less than half have not had such experience.

The results from Table II indicate that the mean and the

Table II

Mean, standard deviation, and t-Test of CAT scores of students

| Sample | Mean | Standard Deviation | t-Test |
|---|---|---|---|
| Preschool | 65.16 | 29.25 | 1.97 |
| No Preschool | 49.52 | 27.14 | |

standard deviation of CAT of preschool children tend to be higher than the mean of the children who have not had such experience.

The results of Table III indicate that preschool children have a

Table III

Mean, standard deviation, and t-Test of parent questionnaire

| Sample | Mean | Standard Deviation | t-Test |
|---|---|---|---|
| Preschool | 37.00 | 6.22 | .92 |
| No Preschool | 35.38 | 6.18 | |

slightly higher score for reading readiness than those who have not had such experience.

Table IV shows four questions on the questionnaire that were to be answered by the parents by either answering "yes" or "no". The questions were: "My child owns a library card", "The parent owns a library card", "My child owns a library card", "My child can read to himself/herself", and "My child has a magazine subscription".

Table IV

"Yes" and "No" responses to the parent questionnaire

| Child-Library Card | | Parent-Library Card | | Child Reads Magazine | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| PS | No PS | PS | No PS | PS | No PS | PS | No PS |
| 18 yes | 11 yes | 22 yes | 13 yes | 19 yes | 13 yes | 9 yes | 3 yes |
| 13 no | 10 no | 9 no | 8 no | 12 no | 8 no | 23 no | 18 no |

PS = Preschool

The results of Table IV indicte that more of the children who have had preshool did own more library cards, more of their parents owned library cards, more could read to themselves, and more children who had preschool experience had subscriptions to magazines than children who did not have such experience.

## Conclusions and Implications

The hypothesis that preschool children who are given a head start in education will not achieve significantly better when they enter first grade is supported by the results of this study. It is of interest in reading instruction to learn, however, that reading readiness for preschoolers does have a positive, though not a statistically significant, effect on kindergarteners and first graders as defined in this study and as determined by the comparison of the CAT scores and parent questionnaires to children who have had and who have not had preschool or reading readiness instruction, the carry-over of reading readiness to increased reading ability is especially of interest. The implication is that instruction in

reading readiness by teachers of preschoolers or by parents at home to preschoolers does increase the chances of better readers in kindergarten and first grade. The conclusion that reading readiness has an effect on reading skills is indicated by the differences produced by the procedures used in this study. The results confirm the findings of this study, and tends to support the inference that formal reading can be enhanced by reading readiness skills taught to preschoolers by teachers or parents.

The results of this study do indicate that preschool children who have been taught reading readiness skills prior to kindergarten achieved higher scores on the CAT than children who have not had such experience. Results of this study also suggest that parents and teachers who aid preschoolers in the exposure to reading readiness skills by providing books, magazines, and by establishing themselves as role models for reading tend to increase the preschooler's interest and intellectual ability in reading.

Reading readiness prepares preschoolers for the reading skills they will need when they enter elementary school. Preschoolers who have been taught reading readiness skills tend to do better when they enter elementary school than those who have not had such experience.

Reading Readiness:

Related Research

If a person were to look-up the meaning of reading readiness in a reading manual around the time 1920 he might find this definition: "... an idea of a critical mental or physical age at which children had the cognitive and motivational skills necessaary to learn to read." (Just and Carpenter p. 353 '87). This theory was based on several studies but two that are of importance. Examining the two prominent theories today reading specialists can not conclusively say that mental age alone dictates reading readiness. Based on her extensive research Dolores Durkin states: "...it makes no sense whatsoever to think about readiness for reading as being defined by some specified chronological or mental age." (Durkin p.71, '70).

The first of the two studies ,one completed in 1931 and the other one in 1937, was researched by Mabel Morphett and Carleton Washburne. They had first grade children try to read thirty-seven sight words and also complete a thirteen step reading program. The children were only given four months to complete the program. Morphett and Washburne were trying to determine, through their research, at what age was a child best prepared to learn to read. The researchers concluded: "...by postponing the teaching of reading until children reach the mental level of six and a half years, teachers can greatly decrease the chance of failure and discouragement and can correspondingly increase their efficiency." (Morphett and Washburnes p. 503, 1931). The two researchers based their conclusions on a correlation between the reading progress and a child's mental age. The problem with the research and conclusions is that information that the children below the age of six and a half did answer correctly was not included in the study's results.

The second study, researched by E.W. Dolch and Maurine Bloomster, agreed with the first study by Morphett and Washburne which concluded that mental age was the factor involved in determining when a child should learn to read. In this research children were expected to match what the instructor said to one of four target words on paper using phonics. The researchers concluded from their study: "Children with mental ages below seven years made only chance scores, that is, as this experiment indicates, a mental age of seven years seems to be the lowest at which a child can be expected to use phonics..." (Dolch and Bloomster p. 204, 1937). The research indicated that children could not learn phonics until they were seven years old. The researchers only examined what tasks the children could perform they did not examine what the children could learn.

Just and Carpenter suggest a modern definition for reading readiness which encompasses intellect, motivational factors, and also takes into account the affect of reading programs: "Reading readiness is best conceptualized as a process of specific cognitive and motivational skills that are related to the cognitive requirements of a particular reading program." (Carpenter and Just p. 354 1987).

Reading readiness is a process of early reading that may begin with reading to an infant or young preschooler. There have been many researchers through the years who have tried to prove, through their research, when it would be the right time to start teaching a child to read. Some researchers believe that children learn at different rates that are independent of their age; not all children can learn

from the same reading program. A.I. Gates agrees: "The optimum time of beginning reading is not entirely dependent upon the nature of the child himself, but it is in a large measure determined by the nature of the reading program." (Durkin, p.69 '70). Dolores Durkin, using Gates's statement elaborates on it: "... concept of readiness denotes a relationship - in this case, a relationship between the abilities and understandings of a child and the type and quality of reading instruction that will be offered." (Durkin, p.69 '70). Reading readiness is a way of preparing a child for reading.

Reading readiness is a way of preparing a child for formal reading instruction. An introduction to prereading skills could be : providing reading materials in the school and the home for the child to look through and become familiar with, encouraging reading in a supportive way, and also providing a role model for the child to emulate. Still another thing that can aid in prereading is taking trips to a bookstore or library where there are rich supplies of reading materials. Children must be exposed to books in order to be aware of them.

The printed word is a mystery that is waiting to be solved by a naturally curious child. Some children love to read and need very little motivation while others need a lot of motivation because they simply don't enjoy reading. Enjoyment of reading could be helped if reading readiness programs and techniques took into account early motivational methods to help all types of children enjoy reading.

There are many programs created to teach prereading skills but very few contain good motivational strategies that encourage children to read. Durkin, in her 1966 longitudinal studies of early readers,

concluded that it was the combined factors of: "... self-worth, parent involvement, and a positive learning environment" that helps create productive early readers. (Durkin p. 110, 1966). Durkin asked the parents of her studies to list the most motivational factors that promted their childrens' interest in reading. The top three answers were: "...being read to at home, eagerness to keep up with older siblings and ... available reading material at home." (Durkin p. 110 1966).Motivation for reading should begin in the home and then expand to the schools.

There are reading readiness programs that do help to show parents ways they can encourage and teach their child prereading skills. One of these programs was started in Tyrone Pennsylvania to help parents of that town overcome their ignorance of prereading skills and to prepare children for kindergarten. Theodosia S. Spewock, an advocate of the program and one of its tutors, had this to say: "Children were entering kindergarten without the intellectual or emotional skills they needed to function in the classroom." (Spewock, p.648 '88).

The Tyrone Program was home based and especially developed for the Tyrone children by reading specialists to teach the children readiness skills. The program had a tutor who went to the homes of preschoolers once a week for an hour or half an hour every three weeks. The lesson consisted of: child, parent, and tutor participation, a story read by the tutor and child, and reading readiness activities modeled by the tutor after the reading was finished. Parents observed how the tutor would read to their child and how she would teach the child readiness activities based on what

the story was about so that the parents could practice with the child during the week using similar activities. When the tutor would leave the home of the child she would leave behind six to ten books for the parents to read to the child during the week.

All the children who had participated in the Tyrone Program would graduate together, meeting for the first time as a group, in the local elementry school. Parents would get to talk with other parents about the program and children would get to meet other children they might be going to kindergarten with that following September. The end of the graduation day was signified by the distribution of a summer activities calender. If the children complete all of the activities, with the help of their parents, they would be awarded a special gift by their tutor when they enter kindergarten. The gift was usually a new book.

Spewock stated that because of the Tyrone Program, test scores have increased in Tyrone, Pennsylvania. She admits That the readiness program was a success. The parents and the children have learned much from this tutoring program. They learned to enjoy the act of reading and how important basic reading skills are to the process of reading. One parent put it this way: "The program has helped us to understand the stages in which a young mind grows, what to expect from our son, and what might be too difficult for him to

Evelyn Freeman and Virginia Wasserman strongly agree with Dolores Durkin and have done research to try and prove that home environment does have a positive affect on a child's reading habits. An observation check list to assess the preschoolers interactions with books plus a parent questionnaire were the instruments used to determine if the child: " ...possessed a literary set." (Freeman nd Wasserman p. 118, 1987). Their research showed a positive correlation between: "...the literary enironment of the home and the literary set of the child in a preschool setting." (Freeman and Wasserman p. 120, 1987). The two researchers supported Durkin's conclusions: "If a child is read to, sees others reading and has frequent access to books, he/she will naturally consider books as a part of the world the child wants to learn about." (Freeman and Wasserman p. 120, 1987).

Dolores Durkin completed another study that traced four year olds for six years in a small mid-western town. The results of the second study differed from the first. In the first study, published in 1966 and was conducted in both New York and California, she reported that schools did not offer preschoolers challenges as far as reading was concerned and that children with prereading skills and reading abilities did better than their counterparts throughout sixth grade. (Durkin p. 51, 1975). Unlike the first study, Durkin showed that the parents of the preschoolers did not support early reading and prereading developement and as a result she concluded: "...characteristic of a family that fostered preschool reading ability would continue to foster achievement with or without an appropriate instructional program in school." (Durkin p.51, 1975).

Because parents did not support her prereading program children's scores were not reflective of her first study. When Dolores Durkin completed her study of the children who were encouraged to read at home she concluded: "...subjects in both the control and the experimental groups demonstrated that earlier starts in reading do not lead to problems but in fact, to very satisfactory accomplishments." (Durkin p.50, 1975). Durkin ascertains that a subsequent reading program that supports early reading and a supportive home reading environment creates successful young readers.

Jana M. Mason did research on preschoolers in 1980 and tried to answer some questions about if a preschooler could learn to read and how. Two preschool classrooms in a university were used for the study. The research consisted of thirty-eight middle to upper-middle class children.

Concept knowledge of letters, printed words, and strategies children used to learn, remember, and spell words were all tested. Also, several parent questionnaires were sent out during different times of the school year and analyzed to determine parent involvement in the preschooler's reading ability.

Mason concluded from his study: "...children who are guided by parents to attend to letters, signs, and labels and are given opportunities to read, spell, and print words learn some of the essential rudiments of reading even before going to kindergarten." (Mason p.208, 1980). Mason also concluded from this study that beginning reading was marked by three levels : "... acquistion of concepts about letter symbols, letter sounds, and printed words or labels for objects." (Mason p. 208, 1980).

In another study conducted by Mason, the three levels of reading acquisition created in the 1980 study were tested. Mason tested the three level model on preschoolers at an Illinois university daycare center. He concluded: "Experiences of recognizing words and identifying signs help children figure out how print is meaningfully related to language, events, and objects... The effects suguest that effective prereading instruction can be that which ties print to meaning and to children's level of understanding about how to read. (Mason p.29, 1982). Mason's research showed that early experience in reading readiness at home or/and in a preschool can preceed formal reading learning in kindergarten.

Lomax and McGee agree with Mason's "hierarchical model of literacy" (Lomax and McGee p. 252, 1987) and they constructed one of their own. Lomax and McGee's model contained five levels enstead of Mason's three. Their research showed that each level influenced the next level in learning to read. The levels were:

1. Concepts About Print Component
2. Graphic Awarness
3. Phonemic Awaress
4. Graphic - Phonemic
5. Word Reading

(Lomax and McGee p.252, 1987).

The results of their research suggested that each stage did not neccessarily have to be mastered before the next level was attempted. Knowledge of one stage helped the child understand concepts of the preceeding levels. Once again, prereading does help in the early learning of reading.

Most parents want the best for their children. Some parents push their children to read before they enter first grade and others use gentle encouragement. Reading readiness in early readers should be done in an encouraging way to promote positive feelings toward reading.

JoAnna Strother and Patrice Werner did a comparative study of two children: one child was a "hurried reader", while the other was an "encouraged reader". (Strother and Werner, p.539 '87). When children are pressured into reading they read for the wrong reason - to please their parents. These children are usually maladjusted to dealing with school and the social experiences that go with it. The parents create a fear of failing in these children which is emotionally damaging.

Mike was a hurried reader at the age of four. His reading ability was rated a 1.5. Mike's parents used flash cards and workbooks to teach him to read. His nursery school teachers stated their concern for his lack of social well being. He did not interact easily with children in his class. When he did play with children he usually wanted things his way.

Michael's parents took their son to the Pupil Appraisal Center, a part of Texas State University for the center's professional oppinion of Michael's emotional and social state. The team reccomend: " ...play therapy to help Michael deal with his negative emotions... and parental consultation to help Michael's parents learn to encourage his social development and deemphasize his cognitive

development, especially as it related to reading." (Strother and Werner, p. 539 '87). Michael's reading was above average but he did not enjoy reading. He read to please his parents. Reading well was stressed too much in Michael's home. He was a "hurried reader".

Jeff on the other hand was an encouraged reader. He was reading two to three years above his grade level. He was a first grader who had no formal reading instruction before entering first grade. When he was three he showed an interest in reading. He was fasinated by words in his books, word games his family played, signs and so on. He really enjoyed traveling with his mother to the library. His mother encouraged her son's interest in reading. As a result of his family's positive attitude toward reading, Jeff was an "encourage reader" who read for his own self-enjoyment.

Strother and Werner created five encouraging guidelines for parents to use with their children:

1. "Provide a rich environment of books and positive reinforcement.
2. Encourage rather than praise... showing judgement puts pressure on the child.
3. Exhibit repect for the child.
4. Eliminate criticism and minimize mistakes.
5. Finally, avoid premature structuring."

An important concideration in developing reading readiness skills is the awarness of books and using the library as a supplier of those materials. Diane Tomko completed her Master's Thesis on the subject of preschool library experience and how it had a direct affect on reading readiness. Tomko had found in her study of parent and child questionnaires along with reading readiness test scores of the preschoolers that library use increased reading readiness scores. The sixty preschoolers who had library experience scored higher on reading readiness tests than those forty who did not have such experience. Diane Tomko concluded: "The results of this study do indicate that children who have had library experience prior to kindergarten have achieved better results on readiness tests than children who have not had the library experience." (Tomko p. 14, 1984).

Reading readiness is a process of prereading that can be taught to preschoolers to help them prepare emotionally and intellectually for elementary school. Reading readiness is important to children for many reasons. The most important reason for teaching children prereading skills is to introduce them to the reading process. Children should be given the chance to explore what reading is all about before they actually have to read formally. Reading readiness should help prepare children for the skills they will need to read.

The separate studies of Morphet and Washburne in 1931 and then Dolch and Bloomster in 1937 suggested that beginning reading ws an act determined by maturity, determined by age. Durkin's 1966

research proved that reading readiness was determined by a child's ability and the type of reading program that the child could learn from and not by age alone. (Durkin p.69, 1970). Durkin also concluded, through her research, that a supportive home environment for reading readiness prepares children for reading. Freeman and Wasserman's research supports Durkin's claims of a supportive home environment for reading. They ascertain that if a child is exposed to readers he/she will become an early reader. (Freeman and Wasserman p.121, 1987).

Mason concluded that reading readiness increases a preschoolers chance to become an early reader. He created a three level model to show how preschoolers become readers. Mason conducted another study to test his model on preschoolers. His results showed that preschoolers, given reading readiness exposure, could learn that print could be meaningful. Lomax and McGee agreed with Mason's three step model and elaborated on it making it a five level model.

Diane Tomko's preschool library experience proved that reading readiness and library exposure does have a positive correlation. When children were exposed to the library their reading readiness scores were higher than those who did not have such experience.

Spewock showed how first grader's achievement scores could rise when a home based reading readiness program had been put into practice by reading specialists with the cooperation of the preschool children's parents.

Strother and Werner, through their comparative study, demonstrated how some parents push their children into reading and how some parents encourage their children to read. The hurried

reader finds reading a tool to use for his parent's affection and the encouraged reader reads for his own pleasure.

Reading readiness is an introduction into reading. It is a way of preparing young children to read with understanding of what reading is. Children should come to realize that letters have sounds that blend together to make words which represent meaning. If a child can associate, at a young age, that print has specific meaning, knowledge of that idea will enable him/her to read at an earlier age as shown by Durkin's work with California and New York children in 1966. Perhaps if a child reads at an earlier age, an age that preceeds first grade, his/her achievement scores may be heightened.

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Appendices

Apperdix A

Dear Parents,

My name is Darlene Cornacchia. I am a graduate student at Kean College. I am currently working on my Master's Thesis entitled "Should Preschoolers Be Taught Reading Readiness Skills."

To Provide data for my research, I need your help. Will you please take the time to complete the following Questionnaire which will be kept confidential. Thank you in advance for taking the time out to help me with my research.

If you would like a summary of my results please indicate so on the last page of the questionnaire. Once again, thank you.

Darlene Cornacchia

Figure 1

Questionnaire Concerning Reading Readiness

| Section | Always | Seldom | Never |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. I take my child to the library. | | | |
| 2. I read to my child at bedtime. | | | |
| 3. I read a book to my child when he/she asks me to. | | | |
| 4. I read to my child in the morning. | | | |
| 5. I read to my child in the afternoon. | | | |
| 6. I read the story word for word. | | | |
| 7. I read some of the words and talk about the pictures. | | | |
| 8. I tell my child the title of the book. | | | |
| 9. I tell my child who the author is. | | | |
| 10. I tell my child who the illustrator is. | | | |
| 11. I pick the books I read to my child. | | | |
| 12. My child picks the books I read to him/her. | | | |
| 13. I have a collection of children's book's at home. | | | |
| 14. My child asks questions as I read to him/her. | | | |
| 15. When my child asks questions I answer him/her. | | | |

| Who Reads To Your Child? | Always | Seldom | Never |
|---|---|---|---|
| 16. mother | | | |
| 17. father | | | |
| 18. child's brother | | | |
| 19. child's sister | | | |
| 20. babysitter | | | |
| 21. teacher | | | |
| 22. other relatives | | | |

| How Often Does Someone Read To Your Child? | Always | Seldom | Never |
|---|---|---|---|
| 23. daily | | | |
| 24. weekly | | | |
| 25. weekends only | | | |
| 26. weekdays only | | | |
| 27. monthly | | | |
| 28. other please explain: | | | |

28a. Did your child go to a preschool or a nursery school?

Yes Or No

28b. Which preschool or nursery school did your child attend?

| Do You Read? | | Always | Seldom | Never |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 29. | Does your child have the opportunity to see you reading? | | | |
| 30. | Do you read books? | | | |
| 31. | Do you read magazines? | | | |
| 32. | Do you read a newspaper? | | | |

Last Section

33. My child has a library card.
Yes No

34. I have a library card.
Yes No

35. My child can read to himself/herself.
Yes No

36. Does your child have a subscription to a magazine? Please List them:

37. What does your child like to read most? Please list:

38. What is his/her favorite book?

Thank You For Your Time.

I would like a summary of your results.

Yes or No

Appendix B

Table V

Total Point Values For The Questions On The Questionnaire

| # Children | Preschool Experience | No Preschool Experience |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | 39 | 42 |
| 2 | 37 | 33 |
| 3 | 33 | 32 |
| 4 | 20 | 27 |
| 5 | 42 | 42 |
| 6 | 32 | 36 |
| 7 | 47 | 34 |
| 8 | 36 | 41 |
| 9 | 45 | 27 |
| 10 | 37 | 36 |
| 11 | 32 | 30 |
| 12 | 38 | 45 |
| 13 | 42 | 36 |
| 14 | 40 | 27 |
| 15 | 30 | 44 |
| 16 | 30 | 32 |
| 17 | 32 | 47 |
| 18 | 40 | 34 |
| 19 | 36 | 27 |
| 20 | 44 | 36 |
| 21 | 40 | 35 |
| 22 | 48 | |
| 23 | 42 | |
| 24 | 32 | |
| 25 | 31 | |
| 26 | 34 | |
| 27 | 47 | |

Table V (Continued)

| Total Point Values For The Questinns On The Questionnaire | | |
|---|---|---|
| # Children | Preschool Experience | No Preschool Experience |
| 28 | 39 | |
| 29 | 32 | |
| 30 | 39 | |
| 31 | 31 | |

Appendix C

Table VI

CAT Score Averages For Reading

| # Children | Preschool Experience | No Preschool Experience |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | 78% | 45% |
| 2 | 60% | 86% |
| 3 | 37% | 33% |
| 4 | 5% | 1% |
| 5 | 64% | 30% |
| 6 | 99% | 65% |
| 7 | 93% | 12% |
| 8 | 5% | 12% |
| 9 | 98% | 81% |
| 10 | 75% | 49% |
| 11 | 98% | 7% |
| 12 | 84% | 70% |
| 13 | 98% | 55% |
| 14 | 61% | 86% |
| 15 | 32% | 85% |
| 16 | 54% | 22% |
| 17 | 28% | 59% |
| 18 | 34% | 59% |
| 19 | 16% | 60% |
| 20 | 58% | 53% |
| 21 | 98% | 70% |
| 22 | 93% | |
| 23 | 85% | |
| 24 | 70% | |
| 25 | 24% | |
| 26 | 98% | |
| 27 | 80% | |
| 28 | 80% | |

Table VI (Continued)

CAT Score Averages For Reading

| # Children | Preschool Experience | No Preschool Experience |
|---|---|---|
| 29 | 80% | |
| 30 | 75% | |
| 31 | 60% | |